

# CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

Published every Saturday, at No. 204, Market street.—Price \$2 per ann. payable quarterly in advance.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, MARCH 31, 1821.

NO. 35.

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you—JOHN xiii. 34.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

## SKETCHES NO. XV.

### *Religion in the Female Sex.*

(Continued.)

The chief purpose of Christian knowledge is, undoubtedly, to promote the great end of a Christian life.—Every rational woman, as well as man, should, however, be able to give a reason of the hope that is in her; but this knowledge is best acquired, and the duties consequent upon it, best understood, by an attentive study of “the page of truth,” instead of entering into the endless feuds, and engaging in the unprofitable contentions of partial controversialists.—Nothing is more unamiable than the narrow spirit of party zeal, nor more disgusting than to hear a female deal out judgment, and denounce vengeance against every one who happens to differ from her in some opinion concerning religion, perhaps of no real importance, and which, it is probable, she may be equally as wrong in rejecting, as the object of her censure is in embracing. A furious and unmerciful female bigot wanders as far beyond the limits prescribed by her sex, as a Thalestris, or a Joan d’Arc. Violent debate has made as few converts as the sword, and both these instruments are particularly unbecoming when wielded by the hand of a female. But, though no one will be frightened out of their opinions, yet, they may be persuaded out of them: they may be touched by the affecting earnestness of serious conversation, and allured by the attractive beauty of a consistently serious life. And, while a young woman ought to dread the name of a wrangling polemic, it is her duty to aspire after the honourable character of a sincere Christian. But this dignified character she can by no means deserve, if she be afraid to avow her principles, or ashamed to defend them. A prof-

ligate, who makes it a point to ridicule every thing which comes under the appearance of formal instruction, and the bigot, who censures with malignity all which is not contained in the creed he has sworn to defend, will be disconcerted at the spirited yet modest rebuke of a pious young woman. But, there is as much efficacy in the manner of reproving profaneness and self righteousness, as in the words. If she correct them with moroseness, she defeats the effect of her remedy, by her unskilful manner of administering it. If, on the other hand, she affects to defend the insulted cause of God, by a faintness of manner, and studied ambiguity of phrase, or with an air of levity, which proves that she is secretly delighted with what she pretends to censure, she injures religion much more than he did who publicly profaned it; for she plainly indicates, either that she does not believe, or does not respect what she professes. The other attacks it as an open foe; she betrays it as a false friend. No one places much weight on the opinions of an avowed enemy; but the desertion or treachery of a professed friend is dangerous indeed.

It is a strange notion which prevails in the world, that religion is a concern that belongs only to the old and the melancholy; and that it is not worth while to pay the least attention to it, while we are capable of attending to any thing else. They allow it to be proper enough for the clergy, whose business it is; and for the aged and for the poor, who have no spirit for any other concerns. But, till they can prove that none except the clergy and the aged, are mortals and liable to sin, it must be confessed that this is most wretched, most dangerous reasoning!

Great injury is done to the cause and interests of religion, by placing it in a gloomy and unamiable light. It is sometimes spoken of as if it would actually make a handsome woman ugly, or a young one wrinkled. But, can any thing be more absurd, than to re-

present the “beauty of holiness” and the anticipations of heavenly joys as the source of deformity and the cause of gloom?

There are few, perhaps, so entirely plunged in business, or absorbed in pleasure, as not to intend, at some future period, to set about a religious life in good earnest. But then, they consider it as a kind of *dernier resort*, and think it prudent to defer flying to this disagreeable refuge, till they have no relish left for any thing else. Do they forget, that to perform this great business so well, requires all the strength of their youth, and all the vigour of their unimpaired capacities. To confirm this assertion, they may observe how much the slightest indisposition, even in the most active season of life, disorders every faculty, and disqualifies them from attending to the most ordinary affairs; and then, let them reflect how little able they will be to transact the most important of all business, in the moment of excruciating pain, or in the day of universal debility.

One of the great designs of religion is to teach us how to live—how to perform the duties we owe to God and to our neighbour—it behoves us therefore, if we would experience all its benefits to embrace it in the days of our youth—when the senses are palled with excessive gratification; when the eye is tired with seeing, and the ear with hearing; when the spirits are sunk, that the “grasshopper is become a burthen;” how shall the blunted apprehension be capable of understanding a new science, or the worn out heart, be able to relish a new pleasure? To put off religion ’till we have lost all taste for worldly amusements; to refuse listening to “the voice of the charmer,” till our enfeebled organs can no longer listen to the voice “of singing men, and singing women,” and not to devote our days to heaven till we have “no pleasure in them” ourselves, is but an ungracious offering.—It is indeed a wretched sacrifice to the God of hea-



ven to present him with the remnants of decayed appetites, and the leavings of nearly extinguished passions.

\*\*\*

FROM THE UNIVERSALIST MAGAZINE.

*To the Editor of the Universalist Magazine.*

DEAR BROTHER,—The following is a brief statement of facts which have lately transpired at Western, N. Y. and is a full length representation of the temerity, imperious spirit and contemptuous domination and presumptuous misrepresentation, which characterize the conduct and doctrine of some of our Calvinistic clergy, called Presbyterians. Sometime in October last, the Rev. Israel Brainerd, of Verona, called at Western and gave a lecture, in which he attempted to establish the doctrines of the trinity, total depravity, election, and endless misery. Having dismissed the assembly, the congregation granted me the privilege of making some remarks, to which in turn Mr. B. replied, and after noticing the statements and arguments, which had been made, observed in substance, and I think verbatim—"I do not fear the investigation of truth, and I am ready and willing to meet any of those gentlemen, (obviously meaning Universalian preachers,) at any proper time and place." To this unprovoked declaration it was replied, if it was designed as a challenge, that, it was accepted; and he was desired to fix the time and place where we might meet for the discussion of truth. He declined making the appointment. The next Sabbath he was again called on by Br. J. Foster to fix upon a time, which he again declined; but it was either intimated or expressed, that Br. Foster might fix a time. Soon after Mr. B. gave public notice, that, he should at his next meeting in that place take into examination a work of Mr. Kneeland's. The time for this investigation not being specified, our brethren gave notice that an examination of the doctrine of Calvinism would take place on Thursday the 28th Dec. Of this appointment Mr. B. and other preachers of the order, were duly and seasonably notified. Mr. B. then gave

information that he should attend the examination of Mr. Kneeland's work on Tuesday evening, 26 Dec. on the word Hell, which Mr. K. with others define, literally the invisible state of the dead, but figuratively darkness or sorrow of mind; he argued in a manner exclusively calculated to impress his hearers with the belief, that Mr. K. appropriated the word to the grave only, and repeatedly on quoting a passage of scripture which went to prove a state of mental suffering, he would express himself with an air of triumphant effrontery—"does this mean nothing but the grave—is that man's word to be taken, that can construe scripture in this manner?"

On M. K's remark, that in his estimation "all the doctrines of men, which limit the grace of God to a part of the sinful race of man, are the unchaste children of her who sitteth upon a scarlet coloured beast," &c. he observed, that if Mr. K. was "deficient in talents or learning he certainly was not in impudence;" and immediately inferred that Mr. K. had called all limitarians, enumerating Knox, Luther, Cranmer, Ridley, and that paragon of Calvinistic perfection Dr. Edwards, "the unchaste children, &c." an assertion, which he accompanied with a manner perfectly suited to a wilful misrepresentation. The indulgence was permitted me by the congregation, to notice these particulars among others of less moment, and the Rev. gentleman was constrained to acknowledge, that Mr. K. appropriated the word Hell to something more than the grave.

On Thursday 28th Dec. the examination of Calvinism took place, at which, the champion who had publicly declared, that he was 'ready and willing to meet' any of us, neither appeared in person, nor by proxy—no preacher of that order attending. The examination however took place, and the five points were faithfully compared with the scriptures, before a numerous and attentive assembly; and it is believed, that, predestination or election, particular redemption, total depravity, effectual calling, and the final perseverance of the saints, were by the divine record proved to be unscriptural, and to constitute a portion of the doctrines of men—the unholy remnants of apostasy and corruption. If on editorial

inspection this communication should find a place in the Magazine, something more will be communicated on this subject.

Your's affectionately,  
STEPHEN R. SMITH.

New-Hartford, N. Y. Jan. 3, 1821.

FROM THE SAME, PAGE 118.

*To the Editor of the Universalist Magazine.*

I should like to know your opinion on the 16th chapter of Ezekiel, particularly whether there is any thing in it that refers to a future state? What is meant by the former estate of Israel, Sodom and Samaria? Will this be fulfilled in time, or in eternity? Must the restoration of Jerusalem, Sodom, and Samaria, with their daughters, necessarily imply the restoration of the very individual persons, who sinned, and who are now dead, or the restoration of their posterity, and the posterity of the nations around them? An answer to these questions in the Magazine will oblige a SUBSCRIBER.

Philadelphia Jan. 8, 1821.

FROM THE SAME, PAGE 123.

#### SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

*In reply to Queries proposed by our friend in Philadelphia, found on page 118.*

WE see not the least reason for supposing that the prophet Ezekiel had any allusion to events which are to take place in a future world, when he spake of the restoration of Jerusalem, Sodom and her daughters, Samaria and her daughters to their former estate. Nor is it conceivable how any serious, candid mind should ever suppose, that Jerusalem, Sodom, Samaria, referring to the cities or the inhabitants, had ever been in the same state, in which they will be, in what we generally mean by a future state of existence.

At present we say no more, deeming it proper that if any one, who feels interested in this inquiry, and who be-



believes that this scripture has allusion to a future state, should have an opportunity of stating his views in a definite manner, to which due attention will be paid.

### Christian Messenger.

Philadelphia, Saturday, March 31, 1821.

FROM THE UNIVERSALIST MAGAZINE.

PAGE 134.

To the Editor of the Universalist Magazine.

HAVING noticed in the 32d No. of your interesting paper, some brief observations upon the xvi. chapter of Ezekiel, and discovering also, that liberty was given for further inquiry, I beg leave to submit the following:

You say you have no reason to suppose that the restorations spoken of are to take place in a *future world*. Now sir, is it not evident that by *Sodom*, the prophet meant the inhabitants of that corrupt city, who were destroyed by fire from heaven? This appears to be the fact. For we find her crime described in the context: "This was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her, and committed abominations before me; therefore I took them away." Here the crime of which the people were guilty, and their destruction, are both alluded to. Those who committed the abominations, were the ones who were taken away, and the same individuals who were thus destroyed, are the subjects of this restoration. Will you say that the prophet was speaking of their descendants? I answer, they had no descendants. Moses informs us they were *all* destroyed. Lot was not a Sodomite, but a kindred of Abraham. Will you pretend that he was speaking of the *place*, and not of the *inhabitants*? I ask in reply, when did the *place* commit iniquity? and when did the Lord take the *place* away? Have we any evidence that the *soil* will be restored, and that the Lord will be pacified towards it?

Now if Ezekiel was speaking of these ancient Sodomites, as appears plain from the context, the restoration in question must take place beyond the grave. For the restoration was future in the pro-

phet's day, though he flourished long after the overthrow of Sodom.

The return of Sodom was prior to that of Jerusalem; consequently this must take place in a future state also. That the restoration of Sodom had not taken place in our Saviour's day, may be seen from his own testimony. He says it shall be more tolerable for Sodom than for the Jews of his day, at the judgment, which was then future.

But you think this must take place in this world, because they are to return to their *former* estate. What was their *former* estate? Favour with God. And cannot men possess this in the future world? If not, all will utterly perish. It is not expected that they will return to a state perfectly in every respect, to their former situation. This you cannot admit, if the event is accomplished in this state of being. Therefore your argument falls. If I am in error please to set me right.

Affectionately your's, DAMON.

FROM THE SAME, PAGE 139.

### REPLY TO "DAMON."

"DAMON's" arguments in favour of applying what is said in the 16th of Ezekiel, of the return of the captivity of Sodom and her daughters, of Samaria and her daughters, and of Jerusalem and her daughters, to a future state of existence, are not considered to be altogether convincing, for the following reasons, among many others.

1. This application of the returning of captivity does not appear to be supported by any similar case recorded in the scriptures. This objection to his reasoning arises from a strong persuasion, that a subject involving so many and such weighty considerations, respecting a future state of existence, would not have been represented by the prophet Ezekiel alone. If this doctrine of the returning of the captivity of people in a future state of being, be a plain doctrine of the scriptures, then it is of no material consequence, as to the support of this doctrine, whether the 16th of Ezekiel be thus applied, or not; but if this doctrine entirely depends on this chapter for its support, then it is acknowledged that it is not supported by any

other portion of scripture, which raises our first objection.

2. His arguments urge that by Jerusalem, Sodom and Samaria, the prophet meant the inhabitants of those cities, and not the cities themselves. But he has not produced sufficient proof of this fact, nor does it appear reasonable to suppose that he was very careful to examine the whole chapter to ascertain such proof. It is likely that he honestly thought that the fact was too evident to require any very particular research. But we are satisfied that he will be of a different opinion if he will begin the chapter and read with caution the whole of what the prophet has said relative to the subject. See verses 1—3, "Again, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations, and say, thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem, thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite." Now it is very evident that the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in the days of the prophet Ezekiel, were the descendants of Abraham, whom the Lord called from Ur in Chaldea. The prophet therefore could not say that the people who lived in Jerusalem were the descendants of the Amorites and the Hittites. These were of the nations of the land of Canaan, at the time the Lord called Abraham from Chaldea. See Gen. xv. 18—21, "In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates; the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites." Now, it is to this Jerusalem, which took its name from the Jebusites, that the prophet addressed himself in this chapter.

3. When the prophet told Jerusalem that Samaria was her elder sister, it does not appear so reasonable to suppose that he meant to tell the inhabitants of Jerusalem that the inhabitants of Samaria were their elder sister, as that he should mean that the city of Samaria was the elder sister of Jerusalem. If the prophet had meant to speak of the relation of the Jews



and Samaritans, he would have indicated it by a brotherhood; he would have called them brethren. So when he called Sodom the younger sister of Jerusalem, it is more likely that he meant the city of Sodom, than that he meant that the old inhabitants of Sodom, were the sister of the then inhabitants of Jerusalem.

4. The prophet speaks not only of Jerusalem, Samaria and Sodom, but of those and their daughters. See verse 55, "When thy sister Sodom and her daughters, shall return to their former estate, and Samaria and her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate." If the prophet were speaking of the inhabitants of those cities, what did he mean by their respective daughters? And if he was speaking of the return of the captivity of their daughters in a future state? Did he mean that the fathers and all the females would be restored, but all the male children be left in captivity? The evident meaning of these daughters is the small cities, which like daughters, who are dependent on the mother, were dependent on these three cities, Jerusalem, Samaria and Sodom.

5. If the returning of the captivities spoken of in this chapter is to take place in a future state of existence, we do not understand what the prophet means in verse 61, "Then thou shalt remember thy ways, and be ashamed, when thou shalt receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger; and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant." Will our friend "Damon" contend, that in a future world, when the old inhabitants of Jerusalem, Sodom and Samaria shall be restored to the "favour of God," that those of Sodom and Samaria will be dependent on those of Jerusalem, and under their control, as daughters are obsequious to their mothers? Or will he adopt the more reasonable belief, that the prophet meant to speak of the future superiority of the city of Jerusalem over those of Samaria and Sodom?

As "Damon" depends on the testimony of the Saviour, concerning Sodom, we here quote his words.—See Matt. x. 15, "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city." If the

Saviour meant to speak of the old inhabitants of Sodom in the future world, why did he say any thing about the land? Will "Damon" contend that those ancient inhabitants will be brought back into the country where they were destroyed, to be judged and there be restored to the "favour of God?"

Having suggested these things, we shall submit them to our friend and our readers, hoping that we may exercise the utmost candor and charity in all our researches after divine wisdom.

FROM THE UNIVERSALIST MAGAZINE.

"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord!"

WITH what joy, consolation, and comfort must every true friend to God and man tread the sanctuaries of the Most High! Here he can bow before his Maker in love and fellowship; and, praying for the assistance of God's spirit to direct, can worship his "Father in heaven" with religious adoration. He can approach the divine Being as one whom he need not fear, from whom he can expect every blessing, and as one whose friendship is immutable and eternal. With the eye of faith, he can look forward to that glorious time, when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess; when death shall be swallowed up in victory; when pain, and sickness, and toil will be o'er; when tears shall be wiped from all faces; receiving comfort from the reflection, that "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." But now reverse the idea. Suppose the preacher spend his time in anathematizing his hearers, representing God as a wrathful, jealous, revengeful Being, who will cause a part of his creatures to be eternally miserable, who has elected a part to glory, and the rest to endless damnation, can the true lover of God hear this with pleasure? will this make the tabernacles of the Lord amiable? O Calvinism, child of misanthropy, man has created thee; thy origin is earthy. Thou mayest serve for a little time to frighten children, and amuse the unwise; but thy destruction is near.

RICHARDS.

MARRIED.

By Rev. Mr. Kneeland, Mr. JOHN N. SEIDEL to Miss ANN C. MASSEY.

The obituary notice of our worthy friend and brother TIMOTHY BLAKE, who departed this life in the full faith of Universal Salvation, was received too late for this paper; it shall appear in our next.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER.

TO THE MAN WHO DREADS DEATH.

Ah why, vain man, ah why that worldly sigh?  
For what is death that man should fear to die?  
'Tis but a change from wo to endless bliss,  
From scenes of pain to scenes of happiness?

I could not quit the fond, the soothing thought  
Of future bliss, tho' long on earth I've sought  
One taste of joy; yet find it vain to look  
For aught but wo—and wo we all must brook.

Then man should feel no horrid dread of death,  
But think 'tis but the loss of mortal breath;—  
A life of sublunary pain and care  
Exchang'd for regions e'en to angels rare.

Fond hope! the only lasting joy below;  
The only balm to soothe my earthly wo;  
Blest with its rays I could so calmly lie  
Upon the bed of death—and smiling die!

FREEMAN.

\* We wish to encourage the poetic genius of "Freeman;" at the same time cannot subscribe to the doctrine "that it is in vain to look for any thing but wo on earth;" for although human life brings with it human afflictions, yet it has also its real enjoyments; which, in the aggregate, are at least a hundred to one of its afflictions. For one, therefore, I can truly say, that I have been so long entirely free from every thing that can be called misery, that I have come to a conclusion that nothing ought to be termed human wo except real disease; i. e. either of the body, or of the mind—if of the body, we know it will either be tolerable, or else it must be short—if of the mind, it is either directly, or else indirectly connected with sin; that is, either from known transgression, which produces guilt, or else from a want of reconciliation to the dispensations of divine providence, without which no one can be happy. But only let virtue and reconciliation reign predominant, and human wo would be as it were banished from the earth.

N. B. In speaking of the diseases of the mind we do not allude to those nervous affections which are nothing more than a disordered state of the system, but only to that which is purely mental, arising either from the known acts of the individual who suffers, or else from some one else, or from some other circumstance, over which this individual has no control, and therefore his only duty is to submit, but not being disposed so to do is thereby rendered unhappy.

ED.

PRINTING

Neatly executed at this office.